

Maria Sandone, M.A.
3205 Descanso Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90026

July 16th, 2017

Re: Character Reference for **Kristie M. Boncore**

Your Honor:

My name is Maria Sandone, and I work as a College Admissions Officer in Los Angeles, California. I grew up in Buffalo, New York. I am writing this letter to you in support of my cousin, Kristie. I have known her since the day she was born in 1992. Being seven years older than her, I have seen her as she's grown throughout the years, as our extended family is very close. For most of her life, I spent time with her at least once a week.

Kristie has a massive support network of people who love her. She is unlike anyone I have ever met, in the sense that I even look up to her in some ways. She has the ability to light up any room she enters, with a charismatic personality that naturally draws people in. She also has an amazing sense of humor. Despite our age difference, I could bring her around my friends and she always fit right in. I consider myself very social and extroverted, and I still am in awe of how easily she makes genuine connections with people.

Another quality I have always admired about my cousin is her honesty. She is one of the few people I know on this earth who is so extremely open and does not have anything to hide. Throughout the years in which she has been struggling, she has always talked to me and other family members about her addiction and how she wants to better herself. She has said so many times that she wants to better herself and lead a good life, and there is no doubt that she really, truly wants that. Finally, she is just such a genuinely loving person, which is such a rare quality to find, and that is clear to anyone who meets her even once.

As I mentioned, Kristie has a long list of people who love and want to help her. Unfortunately, there was also a list of people who took advantage of her sweet and open personality. She was led down a path that she knows was a mistake, and she has spent much time in isolation, soberly reflecting on what brought her to today. She and I, like most young people from Buffalo, have lost friends due to heroin, and I know she is very well aware of the grave consequences of ever going back down that road. Kristie is extremely grateful to be alive.

I know that she is still the same amazing person I have always known. At age 24, she still has so much life to live, and she deserves a bright future. I have seen friends recover from similar drug addictions, and they are now working very successful careers – in economics and law, for example. Not everyone is fortunate enough to do this, but I know that Kristie can.

Kristie is a naturally intelligent young woman, and – despite what she's been through – she still maintains a strong moral character. I know that she is mentally capable and will succeed with the proper treatment. She has always loved helping people, and I could see her easily flourishing in a career in which she could use her skills and talents in this way. Kristie has a different mindset from when she originally entered jail, and I believe in her. I hope you do too.

I truly appreciate your time and consideration!

Best regards,



Maria Sandone, M.A.

Mary Sandone, LCSW-R
87 Glenhurst Road
Tonawanda, New York 14150

July 14, 2017

Re: Kristie M. Boncore

Dear Judge,

My name is Mary Sandone, LCSW-R, a practicing social worker for over thirty years. For the last twenty-two years I have been employed as a social worker for the Buffalo Public Schools. I am the maternal aunt of Kristie and have been an integral part of her life since birth. Our extended family has always been close and I would see her weekly at our homes and during our Sunday family dinners. I have watched her grow up and develop into a very intelligent and caring young woman.

Kristie and I have talked many times about her struggle with addiction and how it was overtaking her life. It's hard to say when everything changed but she has always been open about how her addiction increased over time and how difficult it has been. She regrets how her behavior has impacted her family.

Kristie was a wonderful child and later an older sister who spent countless hours playing with her sister. She did well in school with good grades and extra curricular activities. She was very social and popular. She would always have her birthday parties in her grandparent's backyard by the pool. I watched every year as the number of classmates increased as she never left anyone out. She was such a happy person. When her family opened a restaurant in 2007 it was Kristie who trained me to help out. She was great with the customers and so responsible. She was there whenever her parents needed her and never complained that the busiest time was summer.

Prior to her drug addiction, Kristie had always been a law-abiding citizen. As her addiction worsened it became increasing difficult for her to support her habit. She has never been sophisticated enough or cunning enough to be involved in smuggling drugs into our city and distributing them for profit. Although she has broken the law, she was buying heroin for her and her friends for the sole purpose maintaining her habit. As misguided as it is, in Kristie's drug muddled mind, this was better than some other alternatives. As the drug addiction in Buffalo is increasing, we are also finding new ways to deal with this epidemic. I don't feel a long sentence keeping her away from her family is the answer. As she ages her ability to reason matures and I think now a chance to try some new treatment home with her family might better serve her needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Sandone, LCSW-R

Lillian Boncore
24 Leawood Drive
Tonawanda, New York 14150

July 14, 2017

Re: Kristie M. Boncore

Dear Judge,

My name is Lillian Boncore and I'm the mother of Kristie. I'm writing this letter to help you learn who my daughter is and how I believe she is becoming the person I used to know. Kristie was raised with love and support in everything she did. She was raised Catholic, went to religious education and made all her sacraments. She was an honor student throughout school. She participated in dance class for 15 years, played the violin, and sang in the school chorus. She graduated early and started at Niagara Community College at the age of 17. She attended four semesters. While growing up she worked in our family restaurant. She was a tremendous asset who cooked, cashiered and managed the staff. Kristie was happy growing up and had many friends. Her warm, kind, generous personality makes her a magnet to people.

As her mother, I thought she was going to have a very nice young adulthood. There was one major life changing problem that stopped her dead in her tracks: Heroin. Kristie is a text book case of drug addiction. She started with pills and then heroin. From the moment I found out she was using drugs I started her at Horizon Health Services. The heroin addiction ripped her life as she knew it right out from under her. Her addiction was killing her, and she was not functioning well. I tried everything within my power to get her the help she needed. We tried multiple rehabs, in and outpatient treatment and I even had her arrested just to force her into rehab through drug court.

I watched as the drug dealers preyed on her and others in her situation. They pretended to be her friend just to get her to buy drugs from them. They were texting her frequently asking if she wanted dope. All of the people she surrounded herself with were addicts. The temptations were too great for her to deal with alone. Kristie was dying from her daily use of heroin and she knew it. The day the federal marshals came to arrest Kristie came as a relief to both of our lives. Most mothers would be horrified if their child was arrested. I thanked God that night for sending the help she and I so desperately needed.

So here we are two years later. Kristie has been clean from heroin for two years, with one relapse within that two year period. That is remarkable. I know every relapse can be deadly, but when I look at the whole picture of her drug use, this is the longest she has been clean. I truly believe Kristie wants to be clean. I've attended every family meeting and open visitation there was while she was in rehab over the last two years. I now talk to Kristie just about every day on the phone since she has been in jail. I've been unable to visit her in jail because the distance is too far for me to travel and my work schedule. Our conversations and visits have proven to me she wants a drug free life and misses her family. I want nothing more than to bring Kristie back home to me and her sister.

I want to provide her a safe home while she starts her life over, guiding her to be responsible again. She has a position waiting for her in the family business. Kristie's life was put on hold during her years of drug use but she is young and has a whole promising life ahead of her. She has a lot to offer in this world. Please help me to help Kristie have a new chance at life. Help me to have a life with my daughter. I've never given up on her and I love Kristie more than words could express.

This is a snap shot glimpse of her life. Kristie has never been a bad person. She just became sick from using drugs. Her mind is clear now. I can now see in Kristie the daughter I raised. She needed to be yanked out of the life she was living and she was. The jail time and mandated rehab served her good. But now it's time for her to live again. Kristie wants to come home and live a drug free life. She wants to surround herself with healthy people and her large extended family that love and supports her as well. The difference now is she wants a new life and it's not just me wanting it for her.

Sincerely,

Lillian Boncore

July 22, 2016

TO: Whom It May Concern

FR: Rev. David Herr
Lead Chaplain, Chautauqua County Jail

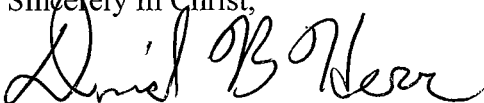
RE: Kristie Boncore

I am writing this letter on behalf of Ms. Kristie Boncore. While in the Chautauqua County Jail Ms. Boncore has sought to attend the AA and NA Support Groups offered through the Office of the Chaplain.

In meeting with Ms. Boncore, she has expressed interest in being placed in a program that offers hope for change through rehabilitation. I have seen the positive results a structured program is able to help bring about in the life of an individual who not only discovers the necessity of change in her life but also has the desire to accomplish the same. Ms. Boncore began attending AA and NA in early February, 2016, and has continued weekly since then. This indicates a desire to follow through with her commitment to change.

I trust this information will be useful as you consider Ms. Boncore's particular case.

Sincerely In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Herr", written in a cursive style.

Rev. David Herr,
Lead Chaplain, Chautauqua County Jail